



Fellows In Arms: A 21st Century Teaching Saga

Aaron Roston

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This story begins as war stories often do: as a call to arms. In the wake of 9/11, Aaron Roston joined the New York City Teaching Fellows program, created to parachute elite "career-changers" into the schools euphemistically known as "hard-to-staff." Thousands answered the call; few were chosen. 25 members of Roston's class began their service in 2002; by the summer of 2005, only 7 remained in the system. An all-too-common occurrence, as half of all new public school teachers quit within five years. Thus FELLOWS IN ARMS is the view from the sharp end of educational reform, and dramatizes what the term "teacher accountability" really means.

The story of idealistic teachers in urban school settings has become cliché. But FELLOWS IN ARMS is different: It uses memoir, history and reportage to create a narrative that finds humor and drama in equal measure. The book also expands beyond a personal story to become that of Roston's Fellows classmates who are assembled like a platoon for their training - the rich kid, the wise guy, the tough chick - and sent to the Bronx. Who will emerge triumphant, and who will be beaten down? No dry policy book, this is the maddening, sometimes tragic, often comic saga of what ensued when the school bell sounded.

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